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Taking aluminium closures for wine to a new level

The **e-WAK®** is the first patented NFC closure dedicated to wineries, allowing them to start a one to one relationship with their end consumers, says the developer **Guala Closures Group**. It so impressed the judges of this year's Alufoil Trophy competition they have selected it for a Discretionary Alufoil Trophy for all round excellence.



This new intelligent technology has been integrated in a WAK closure, which is combined with the aluminium coating, while on the top, clients can personalize using different colours and create decorations for their brand.

“This closure really stood out in every category it entered, as it offers everything from consumer engagement – providing great marketing opportunities – through to product protection – with its security features – and it is a major technical innovation. Plus it has enhanced design features for branding purposes,” explained lead judge for 2019, Laura Fernandez, Senior Packaging Technologist at Marks & Spencer. “We believe this could make some winemakers using traditional closures reassess the value of aluminium screwcaps for their products, as it takes them to a new level,” she added.

By including an NFC chip inside the closure any bottle of wine becomes a “connected bottle”. This chip, positioned in the cap of the e-WAK® closure, sends a signal to enabled mobile phones, delivering potentially four major benefits. For the wine brand owner it offers marketing data acquisition and logistics track & trace, while the consumer receives authenticity certification and direct engagement with the brand.

Piero Cavigliasso, Group Innovation Technology Director, Guala Closures Group explained, “We are very proud to receive a special Discretionary Award for this year's Alufoil Trophy competition. Our company is constantly looking for innovative solutions and this recognition confirms that we are on the right track. e-WAK®, designed for the international wine and spirits market, creates a direct relationship between producers and customers, while also offering highly secure anti-counterfeiting protection.”

A dedicated Internet of Things (IoT) platform, to collect marketing data, has also been developed, which can also geo-localise the products, helping to reduce grey market abuses. Additionally it has the capacity to profile information about the end consumer.

The closure can be customized with advanced printing techniques, while the top element of e-WAK® can be personalized with embossing, debossing, different colours, sputtering metallization and other decoration.

The Alufoil Trophy is organised by the European Aluminium Foil Association. There are five categories – Consumer Convenience, Marketing + Design, Product Protection, Resource Efficiency and Technical Innovation. For the Alufoil Trophy 2019 there were nine winners.

High-resolution pictures can be downloaded and all winning entries can be viewed at trophy.alufoil.org

The European Aluminium Foil Association (EAFA) is the main trade association, specifically representing companies engaged in the rolling and rewinding of aluminium foil and the manufacturing of semi-rigid alufoil containers and household foil in Europe. With its more than 40 members, the organisation represents the total aluminium foil rolling market in Europe. www.alufoil.org

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